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Testimony of
CTCA Legislative Committee
Government Administration and Elections
Date: March 14, 2016

Raised Bill No. 5611 An Act Concerning Notices for Elections, Primaries and Referenda and the Holding of Public Hearings Prior to the Determination of Polling Places by Municipal Legislative Bodies
Raised Bill 5613 An Act Prohibiting Disclosure of Date of Birth Information on Voter Records
Raised Bill 5616 An Act Concerning Notices and Public Information

Good morning Senator Cassano and Representative Jutila and the members of the GAE Committee, my name is Debra H. Denette, I am the Chair of the Legislative Committee of the Connecticut Town Clerks Association and the Town Clerk in East Haddam.

Regarding **Raised Bill 5611, An Act Concerning Notices for Elections, Primaries and Referenda and the Holding of Public Hearings Prior to the Determination of Polling Places by Municipal Legislative Bodies**, the Connecticut Town Clerks Association is very troubled by the addition of section (c) to Connecticut General Statute Section 9-225 regarding publication of warning. The new language would void an election if not warned in accordance with the requirements in the Statute. An otherwise properly conducted election or referenda could be voided because of an omission on the part of a Clerk. While we are not disputing the need for the publication of the warning, we feel the consequences for an omission, as proposed in this legislation, are extremely severe. As a service to our citizens the use of other notification methods including websites, community television, social media, community calendars, and explanatory texts are examples of other ways in which notifications are transmitted without statutory requirement.

Regarding **Raised Bill 5613, An Act Prohibiting Disclosure of Date of Birth Information on Voter Records**, should this bill go forward, in recognition of the assumed intent of the bill, the legislature should be aware that birth information is collected on all absentee ballot applications, which Town Clerks are required to make available to the public upon request. We concur that birth information should not be disclosed for public viewing and we recommend that these documents be exempted as well. Relevant information contained on the forms is still made available in list format, which the Town Clerks already prepare (9-158h).

Regarding **Raised Bill 5616 An Act Concerning Notices and Public Information**, we note similar language regarding relative to the safeguarding of birth dates in the newly added section 1 (albeit it does not address birth year).

Lastly, while I have your attention, the Town Clerks Association would like to request the Government Administrations and Elections Committee to consider a technical amendment to strike CGS Section 9-139c. This section requires Clerks to file, “within ten days after an election or primary on a form to be prescribed and provided by the secretary, setting forth the number of absentee voting forms received from the secretary, the number issued to applicants for absentee ballots and the number remaining unused and an explanation of any discrepancies. The statement shall also include such information concerning presidential and overseas ballot forms. The prescribed form may also require such absentee voting information as is necessary to complete questionnaires issued by the United States Department of Defense”. This statute was put in place in 1955. The Secretary receives these forms from the Clerks and files them without review. The Clerks are required to maintain absentee ballot logs for every application that is issued from their office, making the form (known as ed-628e) a redundant process. If our esteemed policy makers would consider eliminating this requirement to file a form that is never utilized, we would be most grateful.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you, I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Deb Denette,
East Haddam Town Clerk
Chairman of the Legislative Committee, Connecticut Town Clerks Association